

V. REMARKS

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because the Amendment: a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; b) does not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration because the Amendment amplifies issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; c) does not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and d) places the application in better form for appeal, should an Appeal be necessary. The Amendment is necessary and was not earlier presented because it is made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. The amendments to the subject claims do not incorporate any new subject matter into the claims. Thus, entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested. The drawing figures are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83 (a).

Claims 1-3, 6, 14, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Moffat et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,267,075) in view of Li et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,835,279). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 of the present invention recites "an auxiliary power supply connected to the process target by an electrically conductive path connected to the process target". The auxiliary power supply is clearly different from a plasma generating power supply recited in claim 1. The plasma generating power supply is connected to an active electrode and used to supply a power for generating a plasma in a chamber.

The auxiliary power supply is arranged independently from the plasma generating power supply so that plasma generation and plasma introducing speed to the process targets can be controlled independently for preventing damage of the process targets by direct impact of the plasma.

The Office Action reads: "Moffat et al. teaches an electrically conductive path connected to the target 10 via target holder 30, and provided with an auxiliary AC power supply applying a potential to the process target 10 via target holder 30. (Figures 4 and 7; Column 8, Lines 40 Lines 40-63)."

However, the indicated description of Moffat reads: "The magazine 30 is electrically active in this configuration, meaning that the magazine 30 is maintained at

the same voltage as the electrodes 32 and 34. -- the power supply 102 supplies the voltage that holds the whole magazine 30 at the same potential as the active electrodes 32 and 34 (e.g. 400 volts)." The control means 104 only switches connections of the power supply 102 to the electrodes 32-38 and the magazine 30 (Column 6, lines 56-59, Fig. 4). Moffat teaches only one power supply 102 and does not teach an auxiliary power supply which is arranged independently from the plasma generating power supply. Therefore, the Examiner's assertion concerning this point is not justified.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggest the features of claim 1 as discussed above. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine the features of the applied art because such combination would not result in the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

Claims 2, 6, 14, 16 and 17 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 4, 5 10-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Moffat in view of Li as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Ito et al. (Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication 62-267483). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As indicated above, claim 1 is allowable over Moffat and Li. JP 483 fails to cure the deficiencies of Moffat and Li. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the combination of these references.

Claims 4, 5 and 10-12 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable Moffat in view of Li as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Godyak (U.S. Patent No: 4,792,727). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As indicated above, claim 1 is allowable over Moffat and Li. Godyak fails to cure the deficiencies of Moffat and Li. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the combination of these references.

Claims 7-9 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Moffat in view of Li as applied to claim 1 and further in view of Li et al. (U.S. Patent No: 6,178,919). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As indicated above, claim 1 is allowable over Moffat and Li. Li 919 fails to cure the deficiencies of Moffat and Li. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the combination of these references.

Claim 13 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claim is allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features it recites.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Moffat in view of Li as applied to claim 14 and further in view of Japanese Patent 2574852 B2 (JP 852). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As indicated above, claim 1 is allowable over Moffat and Li. Claim 14 depends from claim 1. JP 852 fails to cure the deficiencies of Moffat and Li. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the combination of these references.

Claim 15 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1. Thus, we propose to argue that the dependent claim is allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features it recites.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to

submit those other reasons and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein in future papers.

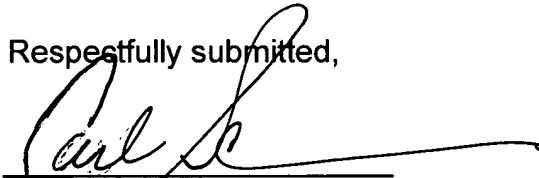
In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Date: December 14, 2006

By:

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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal

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